



Monday, October 28, 2019

Public Meeting of the Howard County Commission on Disabilities
Howard Building, Columbia/Ellicott Rooms 1st Floor
3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043
6:30 to 8:30 PM

MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Heidi Burghardt
Cynthia Coburn
Nicole Czarnecki
Elliott Finkelstein
Arthur Gold
Martin Jones
Leslie Kornreich
Doug Lea
Randy Murbach
Marian Vessels
Karen Wood

EXCUSED ABSENT: Riffat Ashai

ABSENT: Andrea Kolp

STAFF Michelle Henry
Erica Lewis
Terry Zeigler

INTERPRETERS Brenda Kelly Frey
Becky Frey

GUESTS: John Bruns

- I. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions
- II. Old Business
 - A. Approval of minutes for August 26, 2019 meeting.
 - Minutes approved as written

B. Presentation by John Bruns, Sr. Project Manager, Dept. of Technology and Communications Services

- The County is currently working on re-designing their website, to include accessibility features and a more user-friendly search engine. New website will conform to WCAG 2.1 accessibility guidelines which are considered an industry best practice. County government released a public survey in early summer 2019 to gather website comments from the community. Projected timeframe: currently in procurement process, website vendor hired in January 2020, testing to take place in March/April, and new website to go live by summer 2020.
- The Commission provided recommendations for accessibility of the County's website and social media sites, including the need for widespread user testing by community members who have various types of disabilities.

C. Update on meetings to discuss CR23-2018 recommendations:

1. Howard County Public School System
 - Cindy sent letter on May 14, 2019 inviting school system to CoD June meeting offering to accommodate their schedule – no response.
 - Michelle reached out to school system in an e-mail still awaiting response.
 - Doug volunteered to follow-up with the school system on letter and e-mails sent on behalf of the Commission.
2. Howard County Office of Transportation
 - Invite Bruce Gartner to a future CoD meeting.
3. Howard Community College
 - Met with the Access committee for an accessibility tour on September 17th and is reviewing recommendations.
 - Considering another adult changing table
 - Planning to install platform lift to allow ease of access from entry level to Smith theater level.
 - Suggestion made to install signs to notify patrons that an assistive listening system is available.

D. Update on Commission meetings

1. Provider Committee
 - No update
2. Access Committee
 - Next meeting scheduled for November 5th
 - Suggestion made to obtain update from the new Court House architectural design/planning team regarding the inclusion of the Commission's accessibility recommendations
 - The County released a public survey to gather community feedback on elements of the Ellicott City Watershed Master Plan. The survey will close to public comments on November 5th. Erica will forward the survey weblink to all Commissioners.
 - Erica reported that the County Executive plans to hold a Transportation Town Hall meeting in November; notice will be forwarded to Commissioners when the details are confirmed and released to the public.

III. New Business

A. Resolution to acknowledge resignation or excuse absence of Commission Members

- Tabled until later date.

B. Awards Program

- Elliott thanked Commission members for a successful awards program.

C. 2019 Annual Report

- A draft of the report will be available for review at the December 9th meeting.

IV. Announcements

- Motion for Commission to sponsor Howard County's sixth Transition Symposium at a cost of \$125. The event takes place on November 9th at Wilde Lake Middle School in Columbia. Marian moved to approve motion – passed unanimously.
- Commission meeting schedule for 2020. Currently six meetings per year plus an awards program. Suggestion made to keep six meetings per year, on the fourth Monday evening of every other month. Suggestion made to rotate meetings throughout the County, at locations accessible by public transit. Erica will propose 2020 schedule at December 9th meeting.

V. Adjournment

Commission meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm

This document is available in an alternate format by request.

To request accommodations for participation in Commission meetings, please call 410-313-6402 (voice/relay) or send email to CoD@howardcountymd.gov at least five days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) prior to the meeting date.